

Message Text

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13

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 IO-12

T-03 OMB-01 RSR-01 /094 W
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R 161052 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8374

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ISLAMABAD 2226

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT PK

SUBJ: CONSTITUTION MAKING

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN OFTEN CLAMOROUS PROCEEDINGS, CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY DURING FIRST WEEK OF CLAUSE-BY- CLAUSE CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT CONSTITUTION HAS APPROVED 38 OF 276 ARTICLES. GOVERNMENT MAJORITY HAS REJECTED MANIFOLD EFFORTS BY OPPOSTIION TO AMEND CONSTITUTION. STILL TRYING, OPPOSITION UNDER AEGIS OF NEW UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT HAS NOW PRODUCED SERIES OF AMENDMENTS REPRESENTING UNIFIED OPPOSITION VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

1. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IN FIRST WEEK OF CLAUSE-BY- CLAUSE READING OF DRAFT CONSTITUTION HAS APPROVED 38 OF TOTAL 276 ARTICLES. PROVISIONS APPROVED COVER PREAMBLE TO CONSTITUTION, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES OF POLICY. PROCEEDINGS MARKED BY INTEMPERATE LANGUAGE, RANCOROUS EXCHANGES, ARBITRARY RULINGS AND DISPLAYS OF PARTIALITY BY ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, TOTAL ABSENCE ANY SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE, AND FREQUENT WALKOUTS BY OPPOSITION. FLOOD OF AMENDMENTS BY OPPOSITION REJECTED EN TOTO, ALTHOUGH TWO SUBSTANTIAL
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CHANGES INTRODUCED BY GOP WERE APPROVED. SO FAR GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE MUSTER AROUND 90 VOTES (INCLUDING SEVERAL FROM COUNCIL AND CONVENTION MUSLIM LEAGUES, JAMIATUL- ULEMA- I- PAKISTAN AND JAMIATUL- ULEMA- I- ISLAM) AND OPPOSITION ABOUT 25 (INCLUDING FOUR OR FIVE FROM PEOPLES' PARTY). OPPOSITION HAS NOT VOTED WITH GOVERNMENT PARTIES ON ANY PROVISION SO FAR APPROVED.

2. GOP, AS EARLIER PROMISED BY BHUTTO, HAS PROPOSED DELETING CONTROVERSIAL PROVISION REQUIRING TWO- THIRDS VOTE FOR PASSAGE OF NO- CONFIDENCE MOTION. HOWEVER, PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE PROBABLY WILL PROVE EQUALLY DISTASTEFUL TO OPPOSITION: NEW PROVISION CALLS FOR DISREGARDING VOTE CAST BY MEMBER AGAINST MAJORITY OF HIS OWN PARTY IN NO- CONFIDENCE SITUATION OR WHEN VOTING ON BUDGET. OTHER GOP AMENDMENT ADOPTED PROVIDES THAT ISLAMIC SOCIALISM REFLECTING CONCEPT OF MUSAWAT- I- MOHAMMADI (ROUGHLY TRANSLATED AS EQUALITY AS ADVOCATED BY THE PROPHET) WILL BE BASIS OF NATIONAL ECONOMY. THIS SLOGAN IN LINE WITH PEOPLES' PARTY MANIFESTO AND ELECTION CAMPAIGNING IN 1970. AMONG OTHER PROVISIONS ADOPTED WAS HIGHLY CONTROVERSIAL ONE DEALING WITH GOVERNMENT ACQUISITION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY, WHICH BHUTTO' S POLITICAL OPPONENTS FEAR WILL PROVIDE NEW COERCIVE TOOL TO BE USED AGAINST THEM. CONTRARY TO OPPOSITION PREDICTIONS, GOVERNMENT MAJORITY REMAINED INTACT IN THIS VOTE AS IN OTHERS ALTHOUGH BELIEVED THAT NUMBER OF PPP MEMBERS WERE UNHAPPY OVER THIS PROVISION. PRESENCE OF MOST MINISTERS INCLUDING CHIEF MINISTER OF SIND AND APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL PARTY WHIPS APPEARED DESIGNED TO GUARANTEE PARTY DISCIPLINE.

3. POLITICAL OPPOSITION HAS MEANWHILE ENDEAVORED TO IMPROVE INTERNAL COORDINATION ON CONSTITUTION. UNITED DEMOCRATIC FRONT (ISLAMABAD 2171) HAS DRAWN UP SERIES OF AMEDMENTS WHICH IT CLAIMS ARE MINIMUM REQUIRED TO OBTAIN OPPOSITION SUPPORT FOR CONSTITUTION. ALTHOUGH WE DO
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